

HISTORIC AND NATURAL DISTRICTS
INVENTORY FORM

DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
NEW YORK STATE PARKS AND RECREATION
ALBANY, NEW YORK (518) 474-0479

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

UNIQUE SITE NO. (059-28-0028)-002
QUAD. _____
SERIES _____
NEG. NO. _____

AUG 09 1978

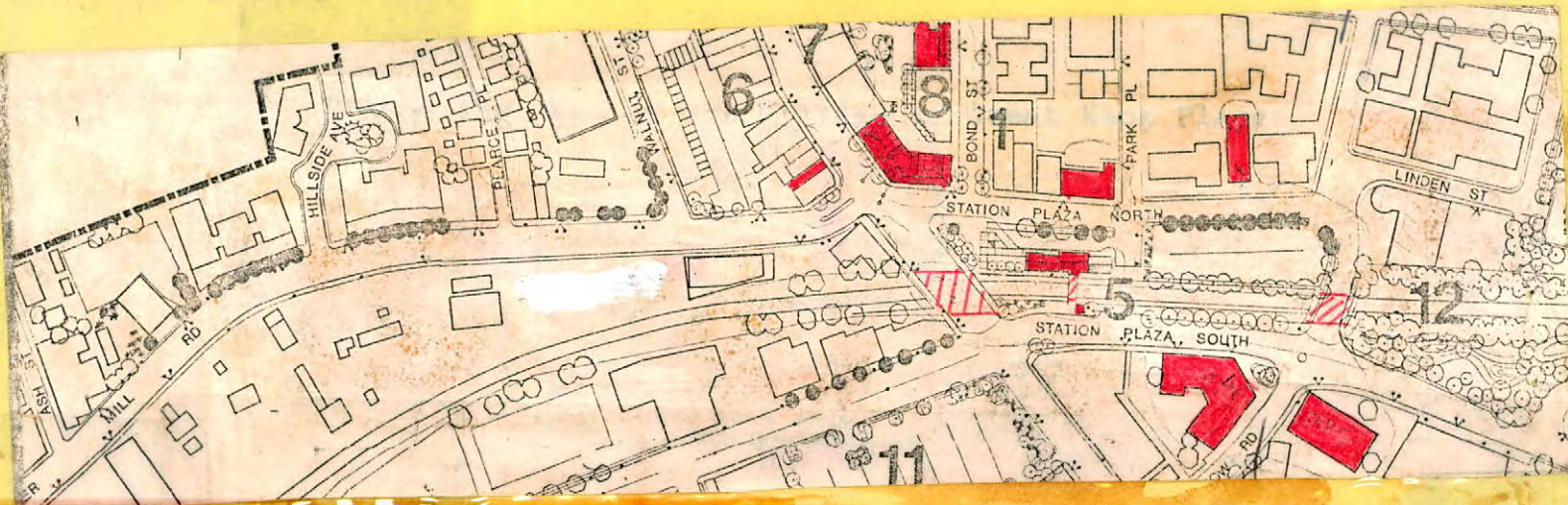
YOUR NAME: Ellen Cole/ SPLIA DATE: September 20, 1977
93 North Country Road
YOUR ADDRESS: Setauket, N.Y. 11733 TELEPHONE: 516-941-9444
ORGANIZATION (if any): Thomaston Landmark Foundation

1. NAME OF DISTRICT: Station Plaza Survey District
2. COUNTY: Nassau TOWN: N. Hempstead CITY: N. Hempstead VILLAGE: Great Neck Plaza

3. DESCRIPTION: Station Plaza is the hub of not only Great Neck Plaza, a village of over six thousand residents in an area of 1.2 square miles, but also of the entire peninsula of Great Neck. The reasons for this centrality are that it is the location of the railroad station, and has been for over one hundred years and the railroad itself is of great importance in the growth of American business. Also, very importantly, it was the wealthy Grace family who decided in the early part of this century to develop the area as a business district for the peninsula of Great Neck. This area was rapidly growing into a choice suburb of New York City. The Graces, and other wealthy families, built up the area using the English style and other European styles of architecture and planning which they felt to be the proper setting (continued on next page)

4. SIGNIFICANCE:

The significance of the area lies in the fact that it is what it is, a central meeting place, a square or a "Place" like those found in Europe, where people meet to do business. It contains many fine examples of commercial architecture, and it still retains its original character in spite of rapid and huge development of the area around it.



Bond Oaks Realty, Sidney Berg, Application to Historical Landmark Commission of Great Neck Plaza, 1977.

6. SOURCES: Vision Inc., and Okerlund/Hornbeck Associates, Village of Great Neck Plaza Visual Conservation and Development Plan, 1975.

Belcher-Hyde, E., Atlas of Nassau County, Long Island, 1914, "Great Neck Station".

Beers, F.W., Atlas of Long Island, 1873, Beers, Comstock & Cline, Brooklyn.

Seyfried, Vincent, The Long Island Railroad, Part Two, Garden City: V. Seyfried, 1963, p. 42, 44, 47. Part Six, p. 100-01.

New York, A Guide to the Empire State, Oxford University Press, New York: 1940, Writers' Program, WPA. pp. 694-95.

7. THREATS TO AREA:

BY ZONING ☐

BY ROADS ☐

BY DEVELOPERS ☐

BY DETERIORATION ☐

OTHER _____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: The name Thomaston was taken from Mrs. Grace's birthplace in Thomaston, Maine.

8. LOCAL ATTITUDES TOWARD THE AREA:

The Village of Great Neck Plaza recently hired Vision Inc. and Okerlund/Hornbeck Associates of Boston to do a study for them of possibilities for conserving the character of the village. They have passed a landmark ordinance, and the first designated landmark is the Thomaston Building, 7 Bond Street, designed by J. O'Connor in 1924.

9. PHOTOS: ELC I, 3

from SW, Station Plaza south looking northeast toward railroad station at left.



Historic and Natural Districts Form
 Station Plaza, North and South
 Great Neck Plaza
 Nassau County, New York

#3. continued:

for their suburban lives.

The concept of a plaza or square is very continental, and not used often in crowded American cities. However, the central location of the railroad station made this a natural plan for the development of this area. Here the community met to do business, and to take the train to do their city business. It is a sort of outgrowth of the traditional marketplace. It is the place of coming and going, and should be maintained as a place where human beings can feel at ease with the surroundings.

Besides the distinctive looking station in the center of the plaza, other important structures include the Grace Building, built in 1915, the largest visual mass in the district. Its mood and English character are carried through the Thomaston Building on nearby Bond Street. One of the first two "big businesses" in Great Neck is located on Station Plaza north, opposite the station. *The former Vigilant Engine and Hook and Ladder Company is also on Station Plaza north, giving historical interest to the plaza. On the southeast end is the large Wychwood apartment building, built in the twenties in harmonizing red brick. As a sort of anchor at the east end is the Bell Telephone Building, which balances in mass the Grace Building at the opposite end of the Plaza.

The present station, built in 1925 is the focal point of the district, noted for its style and character, distinctive on Long Island. (See GNP 3) The tracks were depressed in 1935, thus making the plaza a unified area, rather than one cut in half by the railroad.

Outstanding Buildings in District

- GNP 2) Bridges
- GNP 3) Long Island Railroad Station, tower and footbridge
- GNP 4) Wychwood Gardens Apartment building
- GNP 5) Bell Telephone Company building
- GNP 6) Nassau North Chapels (formerly Fire Department)
- GNP 7) Robertson Block (in 1914)
- GNP 8) Thomaston Building
- GNP 8A) Plaza Apartments
- GNP 9) Grace Building
- GNP 10) B and B Building

Great Neck Plaza was incorporated as a village in 1930.

* See GNP 7

GREAT NECK PLAZA
GNP 1-29

GNP 1) Station Plaza District Form

Station Plaza south

GNP 2) Bridges

GNP 3) Long Island Railroad Station, tower, and
footbridge

GNP 4) The Wychwood Gardens Apartment Building

GNP 5) Bell Telephone Company building, inter-
section of Barstow, Welwyn, Station Plaza south

Station Plaza north

GNP 6) Nassau North Chapels (formerly Fire Department)

GNP 7) Robertson Block (in 1914)

Bond Street

GNP 8) Thomaston Building

GNP 8a) Plaza Apartments

Middle Neck Road

GNP 9) Grace Building

GNP 10) B and B Building

Middle Neck Road (continued)

GNP 11) Mad Nan

GNP 12) Picadilly Square

GNP 13) Jildor Shoes

GNP 14) Forty-five Middle Neck Road Block

GNP 15) European-American Bank

GNP 16) Seventy Middle Neck Road Block (Nos. 67-85)

GNP 17) Squire Theatre

GNP 18) The Alley District Form (123 Middle Neck Road)

Bond Street at Stoner Avenue

GNP 19) Kensington School

GNP 20) Community Church

GREAT NECK PLAZA
GNP 1-29 continued

Barstow Road:

GNP 21) Camelot Cottages

Grace Avenue:

GNP 22) The ELKS Lodge

Chapel Place:

GNP 23) Bartlett house

GNP 24) St. Paul's Church

Gilchrest Road:

GNP 25) Mrs. Lavallette Sage Hamilton house

Welwyn Road:

GNP 26) United States Post Office

Hillpark Avenue:

GNP 27) Spencer Peets house

Pearce Place:

GNP 28) Pearce Place district form

GNP 29) Allen Farm Cemetery



FOR ADJOINING AREA SEE MAP 4 PAGE 26

1975 HAG STROM

GRACE

207

GRACKLE

ber is three. Accordingly if a bill or note is dated February 1 and is payable three months after date, it matures May 4; that, and not May 1, is the day on which to demand payment and on which it is dishonored by nonpayment. If the last day of grace falls on Sunday or a bank holiday, the paper generally falls due on the second day of grace. The number of days to which a bill or note is entitled depends on the law of the place where it is payable, not of that where it is drawn, made, or indorsed. Consult the authorities referred to under NEGOTIABLE INSTRUMENT.

GRACE, WILLIAM RUSSELL (1832-1904). An American merchant and politician, born at Queenstown, County Cork, Ireland. He ran away from home when 14 years old and worked his way on a sailing ship to New York City. In 1850 he went to Callao, Peru, where he became a clerk in the firm of Bryce & Co., shippers and commission merchants. Two years later he was admitted to partnership and finally became the leading member of the firm, the name of which was changed to Grace Bros. & Co. He returned to New York in 1865 and organized the firm of W. R. Grace & Co., to trade with South and Central America, and in 1891 established the New York and Pacific Steamship Company. He was elected mayor of New York on the Democratic ticket in 1880 and again in 1884. He established Grace Institute in New York in 1897.

GRACE ABOUNDING TO THE CHIEF OF SINNERS. A work by John Bunyan, written in prison and published in 1666. It is autobiographical and one of the three great works, on which this author's reputation rests.

GRACE NOTES. Mere embellishments, not essential to either the melody or harmony of a composition. They are called for by special signs or are written in notes of smaller type. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the introduction of grace notes was left chiefly to the intelligence and taste of the performers. But this led to the abuse of overloading a composition by means of useless and often tasteless ornaments, so that J. S. Bach did not leave them to the performers, but took great pains in writing out in detail whatever embellishments he wished. Since Beethoven all grace notes are written by the composer. Although the original function of these embellishments was merely to render a composition more "elegant" and they can be left out without detriment to the music, Chopin completely revolutionized the employment of grace notes by using them in a novel and entirely original manner, so that in his works they become a means of deep emotional and artistic expression. In Chopin's compositions the grace notes form an essential part and cannot be altered or omitted without seriously affecting the character of his music. See ARPEGGIATURA; ARPEGGIO; TRILL.

GRACES (Lat. *Gratiae*, Gk. *Χάρες*, *Charites*). In Greek mythology, originally goddesses of heavenly light, who bring fertility to the fields and joy to men; later, the personification of grace and charm. (See *CHARIS*; *CHARITES*.) Like all such divinities, they are at first anonymous and of varying number, and this is reflected in the local variations in their cult and names throughout Greece. At Orchomenus in Boeotia they had a very venerable shrine, where they were worshiped under the form of three stones, said to have fallen from heaven. In Hesiod we find them called Aglaia (Brightness),

Euphrosyne (Joy), and Thalia (Bloom). These names attached themselves to the Orchomenian cult and later spread through Greece. At Sparta the Graces were two in number, Kleia (Noise, Fame), and Phaëna (Brightness), and the same number seems original at Athens, where the names were Auxo (Increase) and Hegemone (Queen); later Thallo, originally one of the Horæ (q.v.), was joined with them, and this triad appears in the oath taken by the Athenian ephebi (see *EPHEBUS*). Their early connection with the bloom of nature was soon obscured by the conception of them as goddesses of the joy of life and beauty, present at the dances and the feasts of the gods and closely joined with Hera, as marriage goddess, and above all with Aphrodite. The legend represented them as daughters of Zeus and Eurynome. In art the triad prevails, and until the end of the fourth century they always appear fully draped. In the third century the growing connection with Aphrodite leads to a change; they now appear slightly draped or wholly nude, and usually embracing one another or clasping hands. To the Romans the Graces were not really deities, but rather artistic abstractions borrowed from the Greeks by poets and others.

Bibliography. Krause, *Musen, Gratien, Horen, und Nymphen* (Halle, 1871); Usener, *Götternamen* (Bonn, 1896); Furtwängler in Roscher, *Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie* (Leipzig, 1884-86); Preller-Robert, *Griechische Mythologie* (Berlin, 1894); Escher, in Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, vol. iii (Stuttgart, 1899), very full references. For the view that there were three Charites at Athens, consult Robert, "De Gratiis Atticis," in *Commentationes in Honorem Mommseni* (Berlin, 1877).

GRACIÁN, grá-thyán', BALTASAR (1601-1658). A Spanish author, born near Calatayud, Aragon. He was a Jesuit preacher, and he became rector of the College of Tarragona. His works were often published under the name of his brother Lorenzo. *La agudeza, y arte de ingenio* (1642) was a book which had a great vogue in its day and influenced an entire school of followers called Gracianists. Gracián belonged to the cult of Euphuists; his style was obscure and affected, but he was a keen observer and at times a powerful writer. Schopenhauer, who translated Gracián's *Oráculo manual* (Maxims of Conduct) into German, calls his *El crítico* (1650-53) "one of the best books in the world." His other works are: *El héroe* (1630); *El discreto* (1645); *El político* Don Fernando el Católico (1640). Consult Borinski, *Baltasar Gracián und die Hofliteratur in Deutschland* (Halle, 1894); *Biblioteca de autores españoles*, vol. lxxv (Madrid, 1873).

GRACIOSO, grá-thé-ó'só. A stock comedy character in sixteenth and seventeenth century Spanish drama, similar to the euphuistic and "fantastical" knight of the Elizabethan stage. The type originated with Lope de Vega.

GRACKLE, grák'l (from Lat. *graculus*, *graculus*, jackdaw, onomatopoeitic in origin). A kind of bird. 1. In America, a blackbird of the genus *Quiscalus* or the genus *Euphagus* of the family Icteridae. (See *BLACKBIRD*.) The best known of those is the purple grackle, or "crow blackbird" (*Quiscalus quiscula*), which is found throughout the United States as far as Dakota and thence northward to Alaska. It is about 12 inches long, and the male is uniform glossy

New York, A Guide to the Empire State, 1940, p. 695.
Writers' Program, WPA.

NORTH SHORE TOUR 695

large private estates barred to access. Saddle Rock, owned wholly by one family, has as its sole association with bygone days the ALLEN GRIST MILL (*private*), 2.2 m. (L), a two-and-a-half-story, weathered shingled bulk built in 1710 by Henry Allen and operated by tidal flow. Kings Point, which caps the peninsula, is made up of estates of the wealthy. Heavy woods restrict views of the water, to which only private roads lead. Great Neck, Kensington, and Great Neck Plaza are the business centers of the peninsula. Russell Gardens, a planned community, has bridle paths, a swimming pool, tennis courts, a golf course, and a clubhouse. Many of the wooded, hilly, barricaded estates on the neck have been popular with actors, song writers, playwrights, and authors. Will Durant, author of *The Story of Philosophy*, lives in Great Neck.

MANHASSET, 13.6 m. (2,827 pop.), is one of the oldest communities on the north shore. Facing State 25A, opposite Shelter Rock Road, is the old FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE, built in 1810; greenish weathered shingles and gray slate roof give the two-story structure the appearance of age. The ONDERDONK HOUSE, 2931 N. Hempstead Turnpike, built in 1836, is considered Long Island's finest example of Greek Revival architecture. The *perfect two-story* *high*, is composed of four Doric columns and triangular pediment, with the entrance doorway between the two left columns. One-story wings project from the main section.

In Manhasset is the junction with Plandome Road.

Left on Plandome Road to Manhasset Neck, which includes the villages of PLANDOME, 1 m. (893 pop.), PORT WASHINGTON, 3.3 m. (3,409 pop.), SANDS POINT, 5.2 m. (601 pop.), and FLOWER HILL, 13.9 m. (633 pop.). The old PLANDOME MILL (L) (*not open*), built in 1673, still stands by Leeds Pond. Port Washington is built on a hill overlooking Manhasset Bay, which in summer accommodates a swarm of water craft and the New York-Bermuda air liners. A ferry (*car and driver*, \$1.75; *car, driver, and one passenger*, \$2; *car, driver, and 2 or more passengers*, \$2.25) connects Port Washington and New Rochelle.

Sands Point, a highly restricted residential community, is named for Captain John Sands (1649-1712), who mastered a packet plying between New York and Virginia ports and is said to have introduced the locust tree to Long Island.

ROSLYN, 16.9 m. (970 pop.), stretching along the curving shore of Hempstead Harbor, is backed by the wooded slopes of the Wheatley Hills. For many years the settlement was known as the town at the head of the Harbor.

William Cullen Bryant lived in Roslyn from 1843 to 1878; he came to New York in 1825 and a few years later became editor of the New York *Evening Post*, a position he held until his death. He divided his time between this house and his city home. A pair of Bryant's eyeglasses is exhibited in the ROSLYN GRIST MILL (L), Main St., a two-story building, half of which is below the road level. Originally the Onderdonk grist mill and the center of life for the village, it is now a combination museum and tea room. The water wheel still turns in the old raceway; inside, original millstones and mixers are exhibited along with Colonial heirlooms. John Robeson started to build the mill in 1698, but he failed to complete the job, and it was not until later that the mill began operations.

Bryant's house, CEDARMERE (L) (*private*), Bryant Ave., Roslyn Harbor, built in 1787, has been adorned with gray stucco; the two-and-a-half-story, gable-roofed dwelling bears little resemblance to the original. The poet's letters and writings abound in comments on the Roslyn countryside

1940

694 NEW YORK

A large commuting population in its western quarter, farmers, fishermen, and local shopkeepers—these are the foundations on which the island economy rests. During the winter months the communities go about their business quietly and methodically. With the coming of the summer month the island, with its bathing beaches, camp sites, yacht clubs, golf clubs, polo clubs, fishing grounds, and State parks, becomes a playground for the metropolitan millions.

Hard-surfaced roads gridiron the western quarter of the island, but farther east the pattern becomes more diffuse. The west-to-east road system is admirably balanced: two highways serve the 'north shore,' two the 'south shore,' one the middle island belt—all supplemented by two excellent State parkways built with an eye to scenic effect and offering speedy access to points well inland. Extensions, which will ultimately take these parkways to most of the principal State parks, are being built as planned.

NORTH SHORE TOUR

Queensboro Bridge—Roslyn—Huntington—Kings Park—Smithtown—Smithtown Branch—Port Jefferson—Junction with State 25; State 25A. 74.4 m.

Route paralleled in stretches by the Long Island Railroad. Hotel accommodations ample, but tourist camps and houses are few; restaurants are plentiful.

State 25A, reached from Manhattan Island via the Queensboro Bridge, serves the indented north shore of Long Island, and is paralleled one to five miles south by State 25 (see *Jericho Turnpike Tour*). Long Island Sound is always close and often in sight. Through some stretches the road, rising and dipping to the uneven surface, is bordered by oak forest.

Between New York City and Northport are necks on which several villages and many large private estates have been built. The necks, while equipped with mayor, police, and civic machinery, are dominated by the rich landholders.

Between the eastern end of the QUEENSBORO BRIDGE, 0 m., and the Nassau County Line, 11.7 m., State 25A follows the streets of the borough of Queens.

At 11.8 m. is the junction with Bayview Ave.

Left on Bayview Ave. to GREAT NECK ESTATES, 0.7 m. (2,004 pop.), SADDLE ROCK, 1.7 m. (74 pop.), and KINGS POINT, 2.8 m. (1,225 pop.).

East from Kings Point on Elm Road, past estates with residences screened by trees, to GREAT NECK, 4.4 m. (6,214 pop.), spread around a village green. Middle Neck Road, running south, connects KENSINGTON, 5.7 m. (926 pop.), GREAT NECK PLAZA, 5.9 m. (2,076 pop.), RUSSELL GARDENS, 6.1 m. (547 pop.), and THOMASTON, 6.3 m. (1,155 pop.). The contrast of these pastoral spots with the clamor of the adjacent metropolis is striking. Long winding roads run through the chaos of trees and skirt landscaped plots. The region is exclusively residential, the

large private estates as its sole association. Two-and-a-half-erated by tidal the wealthy. He lead. Great Neck peninsula. Russian tennis courts, a estates on the authors. Will D

MANHASSETT on the north shore old FRIENDS M and gray slate The ONDERDON considered Lon angular pedim columns. One-s In Manhasse

Left on Pland DOME, 1 m. POINT, 5.2 m. ME MILL (L) built on a h swarm of water \$1.75; car, drive connects Port V Sands Point, Sands (1649-17 ports and is said

ROSLYN, 1 Hempstead Ha For many year Harbor.

William Cul New York in Evening Post, a tween this hou hibited in the ing, half of wh mill and the ce and tea room. inal millstones John Robeson the job, and it

Bryant's hou built in 1787, story, gable-ro poet's letters a

1940

and friendliness attended his every step. And after his death, their spokesman, Edwin Wildman, said of him:

"Davison had friends, but he made them; he had luck, but 'twas the luck of inspiring confidence in his ability and integrity."

Great Neck was one of the earliest settlements in the Town of Hempstead. The place was called Madman's Neck originally and the date of settlement is not known exactly, although supposedly 1676. The records of the first ten years of the town of Hempstead have been lost, and there is a standing reward for their recovery. They extended from 1648 to 1658. The Town Records from 1658 to 1886 in book form are preserved at Town Hall, Manhasset. The early history is that of the entire section.

Henry Allen founded that family and was a man of importance. William Allen fought in the Revolution. Eldred Allen and Adrian Van Nostrand had fine records in the War of 1812. George L. Whittle compiled the family genealogy. Miss Anne Van Wyck gathered the data of the Van Wycks. The Schencks, Onderdonks, Van Nostrands, Kissams, Skidmores, Dodges and Platts were also noted.

During the Revolution, whaleboat pirates from Connecticut made raids at night, sacked farm houses and killed many residents.

Men of note already had built homesteads at Great Neck, Hyde Park and other places now richly populous when Thompson wrote his history. Hyde Park was formerly the property and residence of George Duncan Ludlow, one of the judges of the Supreme Court of the Colony, as well as of his brother, Colonel Gabriel Ludlow, who commanded a regiment of American Royalists during the Revolution. In consequence of their adherence to the Royal cause, their estates were forfeited to the United States government. The mansion erected by Judge Ludlow was standing until 1817, when it was destroyed by fire during its occupation by the notorious William Cobbett.

Great Neck is on a peninsula projecting into the Sound about four miles. Manhasset Bay, called in Indian days "Sint Sink," is at the east and Little Neck Bay at the west. It includes the incorporated villages of Great Neck, Great Neck Estates, Kensington and Saddle Rock, while Great Neck Station and Great Neck Hills are included in its environs. Its population is about 6,000, and it has one of the largest commuting populations on the north shore. Electric train service to New York has been responsible for much of its development. In 1923, three hundred houses were in the course of construction. It was said that fifty of its residents were rated at more than \$1,000,000 each.

Great Neck's artistic colony comprises many of Broadway's shining lights. Representatives of the theatrical world who have their homes in Great Neck include Donald Brian, Jane Cowl, Olga Petrova, Dr. John D. Stewart, Mme. Namara and her husband, Guy Bolton; Frank Craven, George M. Cohan, Creighton Hale, Oscar Shaw, Ed Wynn, Joseph Santley, Hal Forde, Ernest Truex, Arthur Hopkins, Sam Harris and J. E. Hazzard. Jesse Livermore has his home there and Ring Lardner also is numbered among its residents.

Great Neck has electricity, street water, a sewer system, two banks, three fire companies with motor apparatus, a high school, two grammar schools, two newspapers, two theatres, six public garages, a Health Association and District Nurse, and a Village Bathing Beach (not open to the public). The churches are: Methodist, Episcopal, Community, Christian Science, and Roman Catholic. The Ma-

Bell Blvd. No information available on an early depot building. In 1886, a building was erected west of Bell Blvd. and south of the track. This disappeared in 1924 and a new building was erected.

Douglaston: The first depot, on the north side of the railroad and west of Douglaston Parkway, was built April and May 1867 by William P. Douglas and named Douglaston in his honor. In April 1887, Douglas and others contributed \$6,000 for a new depot in Queen Anne style, which was opened in June 1887. This was rebuilt in 1898 and demolished March 1962.

Little Neck: First depot built February-May 1870 east of Little Neck Parkway. Station opened July 1870 as Little Neck, superseding the earlier Little Neck station, which now took the name Douglaston. A new brick depot was built September 1890 and opened in December. It was of brick in Queen Anne style and cost \$10,000. Still standing.

Great Neck: The original terminus. Called Great Neck 1866-69; then Brookdale 1869-1872; Great Neck 1872-1890's; Thomasston during the 90's; in 1903 the old name of Great Neck was resumed. Original depot went up in 1866; this was replaced by a frame depot built July-August 1883. Remodeled August 1893. Torn down 1924; the present station was erected in 1925.

Manhasset: In February 1898, the Travers Estate agreed to donate land to the railroad for a Manhasset station site; this plot was 250 feet west of the Plandome Road. A wooden frame depot was built in 1899. The present station building was erected in 1924.

Plandome: A station was opened on the east side of the track in 1909. All trains began to stop regularly instead of on signal only, as formerly, in March 1911, when the Post Office was opened.

Port Washington: Service was opened to Port Washington in June 1898. The original depot of 1898 still stands, a one-story building facing Main Street with train sheds in the rear. It has been frequently altered over the years, the chief improvement being the brick facing, put on in 1930.

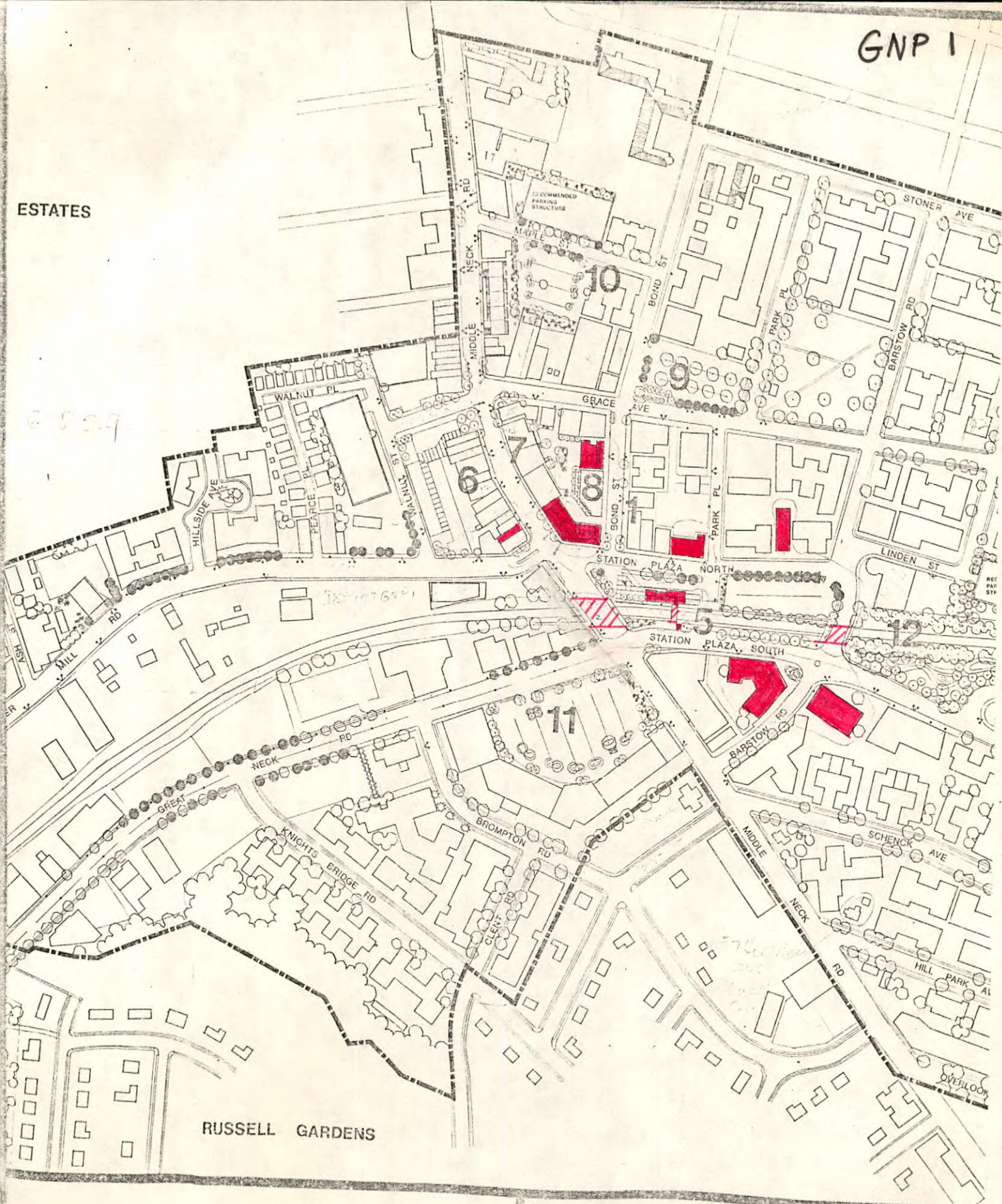
Seyfried, Vincent F., The Long Island Railroad, Part Six, Garden City: 1975, p. 282.

Flushing (Blvd. a with M 1893, t College Po cated o 14; 186 Februar Malba: Ar develop and inc building Whiteston 30, 187 This lar ruary 1 Whiteston wooden and was depot v and the lasted to

← 1925

GNP 1

ESTATES

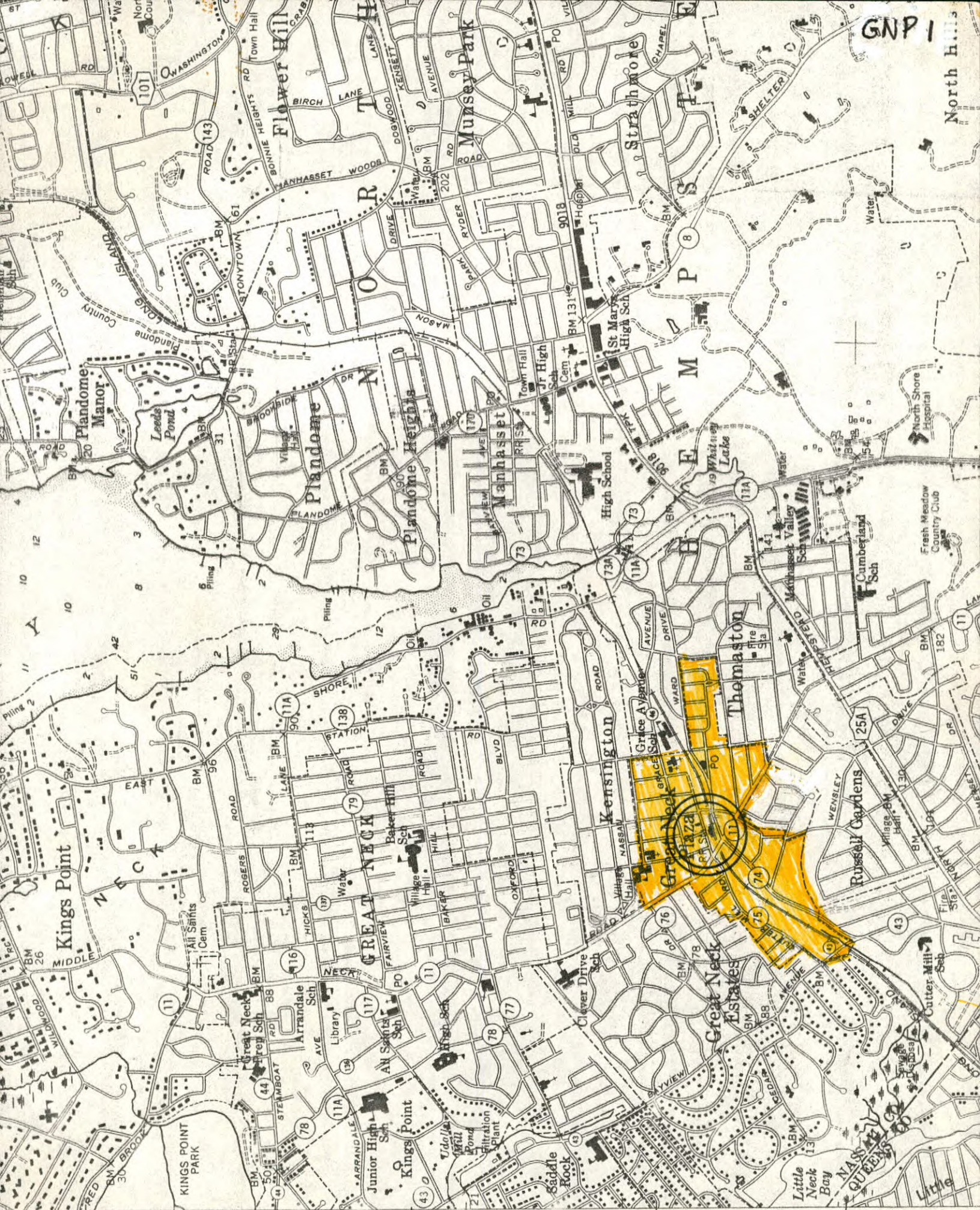


VISION AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN
GREAT NECK PLAZA

Vision Inc, and Okerlund/Hornbeck Associates, Village of Great Neck Plaza Visual Conservation and Development Plan 1975.

ILLUSTRAT

Okerlund/Hornbeck Associates



New York State DOT, Seacliff Quad

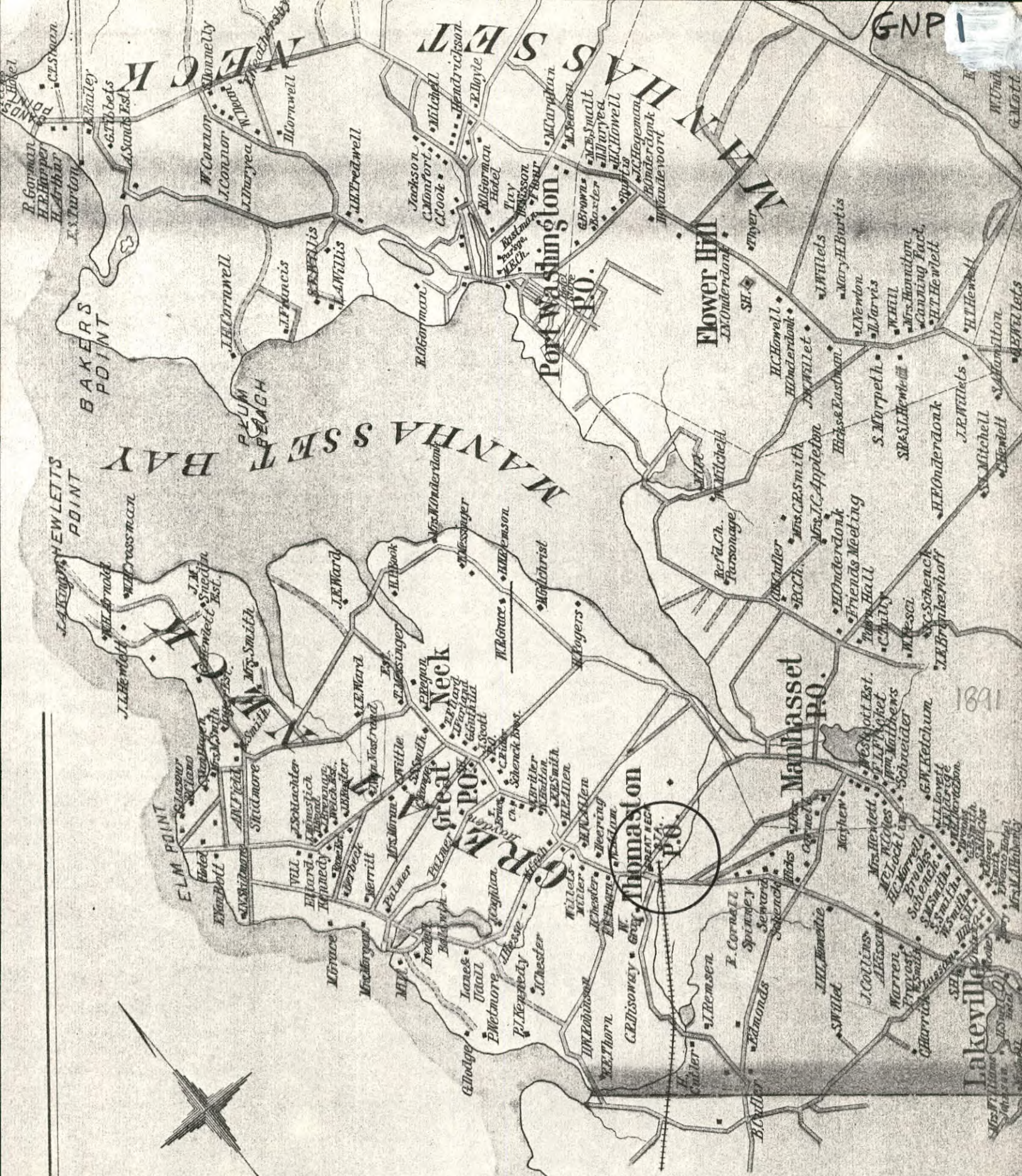
210 000

47°30'

431500m. N.



Beers Comstock, Atlas of Long Island, 1873.



Wolverton, Atlas of Queens County, 1891.

participated, while the well-to-do population aided liberally with funds. All the houses were decorated with flags and bunting. The first regular passenger train left Long Island City at 11 A.M. and arrived at 11:40. From Great Neck on, the train was greeted with loud cheers all along the right-of-way through Manhasset, and as it came in sight of Port Washington, the cheers were deafening. President Baldwin and his official party met the welcoming committee at the new depot and in a short time, the parade formed. A reviewing stand had been set up in front of the Baxter homestead on the north side of Main Street about midway between Monroe and Madison Street. Then, led by the Port Washington Band, group after group marched past the stand including the Fire Departments of Mineola, Sea Cliff, Hyde Park, Roslyn, Great Neck and Port Washington. Later, the railroad officials and guests proceeded to the orchard opposite the railroad station where addresses were made by President Baldwin and others. Fully 3,000 people were assembled on Main Street and the railroad grounds. After the festivities President Baldwin and his party left for Long Island City and the residents assembled in a nearby grove where a picnic was held.

At first Port Washington was scheduled for only six trains a day each way; after all the facilities were moved from Great Neck, the old terminus, a fuller schedule was offered. The opening of the road marked a new era for Port Washington and Manhasset. The only way of reaching either village formerly had been by water from New York or by taking a "stage", as public carriages were called in those days, from Great Neck. Now it became possible to reach New York in an hour. When we realize that the train was the sole public transportation available at that time, we can better appreciate how anxiously isolated communities looked forward to railroad service. The north shore communities especially suffered from geographical isolation because of the deep indentations of the various bays or fjords, creating long necks of land. Road travel was a matter of constant climbing and descending because of the deeply indented terrain and this inhibited travel and commercial development. The railroad extension was understandably greeted with open arms by the residents, business men and realtors all through Manhasset, Plandome and Port Washington.

The sole group not too happy with the new extension was

the sizable
conductors,
located ther
most of the
ready scouri

1898

the sizable number of Long Island R.R. employees—brakemen, conductors, engineers, firemen—who lived in Great Neck and had located there because it was the eastern terminus of the branch; most of these planned moves to Port Washington and were already scouring the place for vacant houses.

1898

Seyfried, Vincent F., The Long Island Railroad, Part Six

From Vincent F. Seyfried scrapbook, 10/3/77, Garden City, Long Island.

Armory will be sold at public auction on the 10th. This bldg. was erected in 1874 and in its time was considered a model bldg. of its kind. It was designed by Engelbert who was a prominent Manhattan architect. The property has a frontage of 120 ft. on Hanson Pl., a rear width of 118.7 and an L with a frontage on Flatbush Ave. of 100 ft. Since the R.R. vacated it, it has been used for a cycling school and lastly as a store room by the B. of Ed. The LIRR recently bought from Mrs. Richardson the plot adjoining it which for years has been enclosed with a high fence. The latter plot has a frontage of 43.4 ft. on Hanson Pl. a depth adjoining the armory of 106.3 ft., 71 ft. Ashland Pl. and on Flatbush Ave. 37.7 ft. Mar 1, 1903 7:4

1903

Want a fine new depot: A petition signed by all the prominent residents of Great Neck was presented to Pres. Baldwin yesterday asking that a new depot be erected at this place. The petition was presented by A.H. Alker of the Ward Steamship Line. This petition is the result of concerted action on the part of wealthy New Yorkers who own villas here to get improvements in the village. These men have sent millions of dollars in improving their homes and they want the surroundings to be in keeping with them. Among those who have petitioned the RR are: Roswell P. Eldridge, Hazen L. Hoyt, William R. Grace, William L. Stow, W. Gould Brokaw and William K. Vanderbilt, Jr. There is no station along the line that has such a wealthy clientele as Great Neck yet the present bldg. is one of the smallest and most uninviting. Years ago a broad plaza was given for the depot in expectation that it would be improved. It is now a mud hole strewn with rocks and debris. Mar 3, 1903 20:2

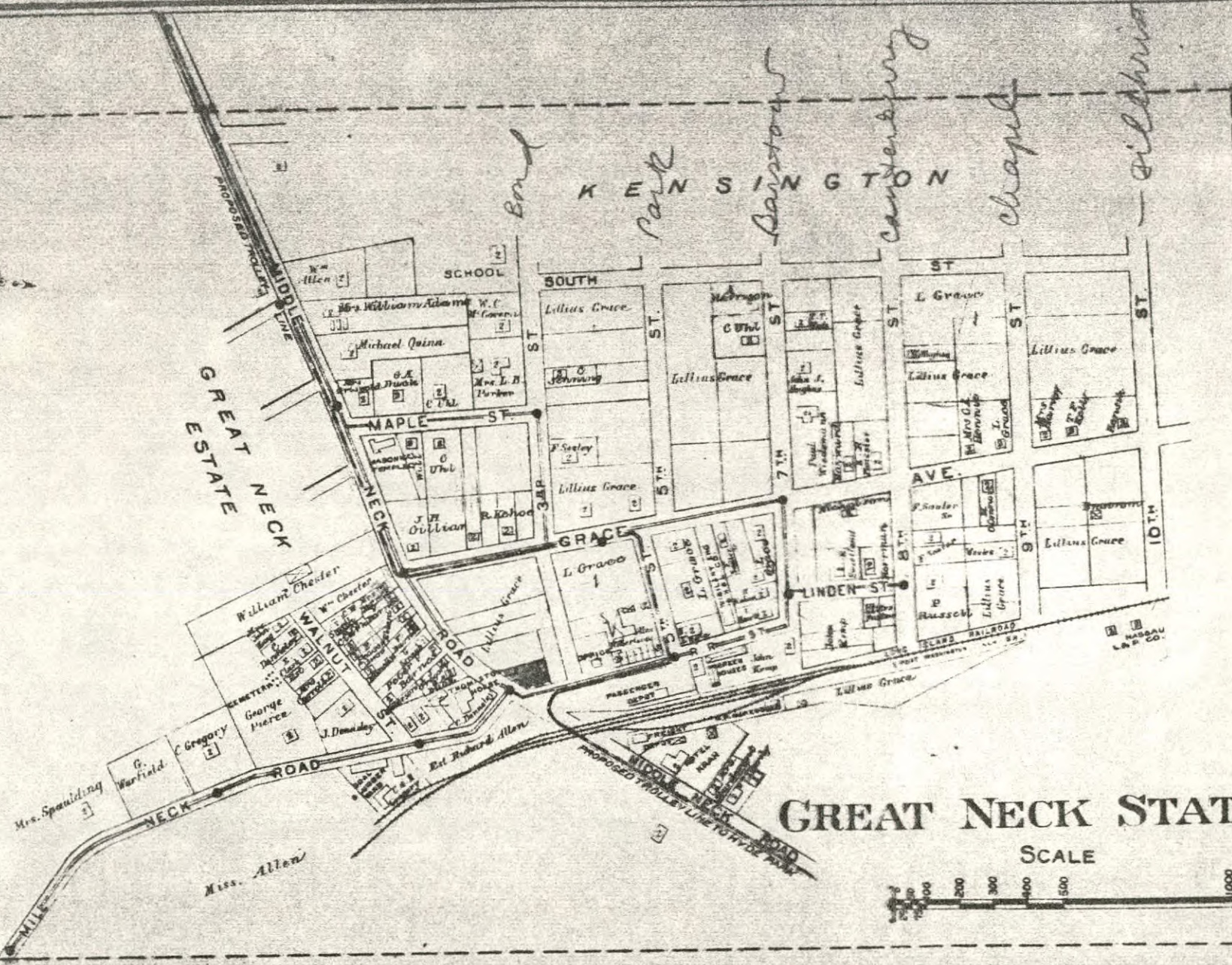
Train Held Up Half Hr.: The Patchogue Express train in charge of Conductor Ringhouse was delayed nearly half an hr. at this place at 5 o'clock by the snapping off of a cross pipe on the air brake of parlor car #707. The train was running at a high rate of speed at the time and the piece of pipe over two ft. in length, bumped along the track for some distance before dropping to the ground. Control of the train by the air brakes was lost by the pipe breaking and the engineer brought the train to a standstill. A wooden plug was driven into the hole left by the brake and the train proceeded east. Mar. 4, 1903 8:3

New Freight Station: The officials of the LIRR have decided to make a freight station of the brick bldg. near the junction of Lawrence St. and Sanford Ave. formerly used as a parlor car repair shop. The RR officials will make extensive improvements to the bldg. The land in the vicinity will be graded and made convenient for the receipt and delivery of freight. It is expected the new station will be completed and opened by May 1. Mar. 5, 1903 8:1

Heavier Rails to be Laid: New rails weighing 100 lbs. to the length will be laid on the double track of the Montauk Div. between Balwins and Babylon to be ready when the spring timetable goes into effect. Material for the work is being delivered and the section crews will lay the rails at once. The new rails will give a 100 lb. section from Rockaway Junction to Babylon and enhance the safety of the fast express trains and heavy freights running on the division. Mar. 6, 1903 11:6

William H. Baldwin, pres LIRR, has sold his fine residence at 112 Willow St. to William E. Harmon of the real estate firm of Wood, Harmon & Co. The terms of sale are private. Mr. Baldwin has moved to his fine new residence at Locust Valley/ Brooklyn however will continue to be the legal residence of Mr. Baldwin. He is making arrangements to still live on the Heights. Mar. 7, 1903 13:3

Big PRR Land Purchase: 13 contracts for the sale of different parcels of property in Newtown near Woodside to agents of the PRR were signed yesterday.



Belcher-Hyde, E., Atl
"Great Neck Station".

GNP 1

1914,

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, JANUARY 16, 1977

ABOUT LONG ISLAND

Great Rubbernecking in Great Neck

By RICHARD F. SHEPARD

THERE is usually a charm about stores along a town street that eludes me in shopping centers. Shopping centers are probably marvelous if you are a shopper, but for a stroller they lack the flavor, no matter how ornately designed, that you get sauntering down a street.

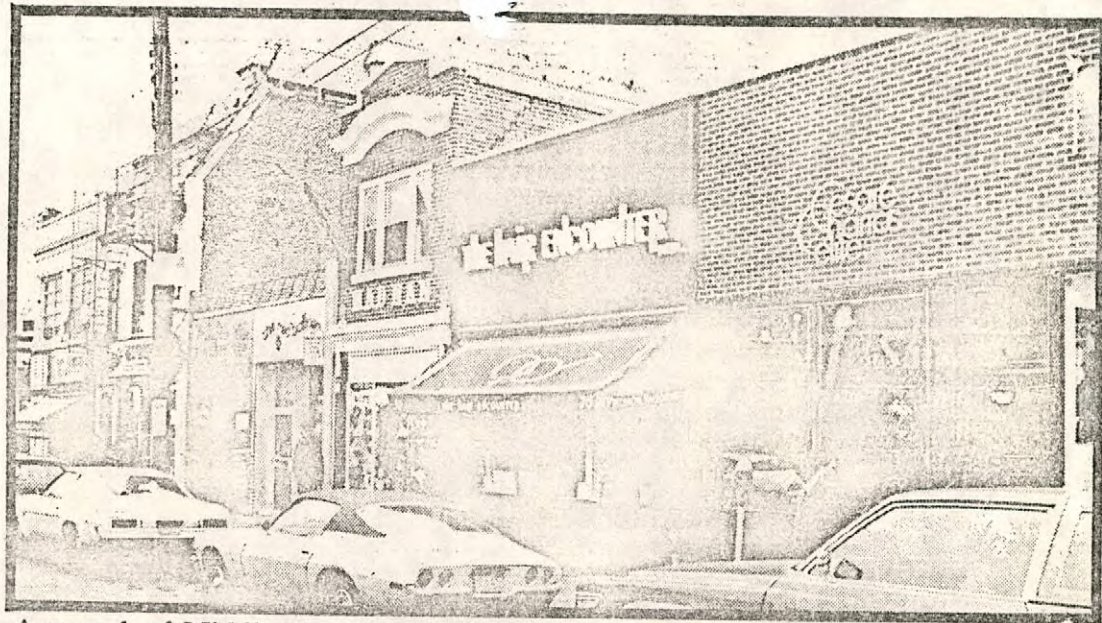
Of course there are towns and towns and streets and streets. Many towns are not worth getting out of the car for: the tired coffee shop, the standard-model five-and-dime (the name may no longer be applicable, but you know the store I mean), the gaudy pizza parlor that specializes in a limp and lean product and the funeral parlor that seems to indicate that the town and all in it have come to the end of the line.

And then there is Great Neck. Great Neck is not a town like any other. It is a comfortable way station on the cultural (and economic) line that runs from Manhattan's Upper East Side out to the Hamptons. Great Neck has touches redolent of both, but it is very much its own town.

I enjoy walking Middle Neck Road and environs just north of the railroad station. It is a pleasant pastime even when most of the stores are closed, as they were on a recent Sunday afternoon when the street was sparsely used and you could have your choice of parking meters free. It may even be nicer when the street is fairly well shut down because it gives the sense of being alone, almost, on a small stage set, and you can ruminate. Personally speaking, ruminating beats shopping, but I grant you this is open to debate.

So I ruminated in Middle Neck Road and did more of the same on Bond Street, the short street that parallels the main stem. I was taken by the proliferation of First Avenue nomenclature: Gew Gaw, Ulla, the Showcase, the Yogurt Stop and the Stitcherie. Artsy-craftsy names of the sort that will rarely be dropped in your average community on the Island.

The stores are set up in two-story buildings, some of them in that suburban design with stone and brown slats that is supposed to emit a high-class aura of Old England. But the stores, happily, pay no attention to that and each has very much its own personality. Perhaps that is why a street is so much more attractive than



A stretch of Middle Neck Road. There's more, much more.

a shopping center. It is more heterogeneous. Each store has its own idea of décor and fits into spaces of different sizes. So much for architectural notes.

At the Poultry-Mart they were offering Bar-B-Q Fit for a King, gefilte fish and eggplant salad, an irresistible combo that was resisted only because the place was closed.

You could get poached salmon, it said, at J. & D. Sea Food, while "fancy fruits and vegetables" were the stock in trade at the Smiling B. J., which was decked out with a Bicentennial flag.

Nitya's window proclaimed its function neatly, displaying various items of Orientalia, and you did not have to ponder what they did in Aviv Kosher Falafel and Pizza. Gauze and Effect was a boutique and Mad Nan was a gift shop.

Around the corner was Chopsteak Charlie's, apparently a poor relative of the beefsteak fellow. Also the Shirting Shop, crammed with sweatshirts emblazoned with the usual legends so dear to teen-agers and older show-offs: "Unemployed With Dignity" and "Body English Available in Many Colors"—that sort of thing.

Went around the block, via the railroad station, past a golf shop, two flor-

ists (strategically located for the husband who is arriving late or with an unexpected guest and will need a peace offering for the lady of the house) and a tennis shop. On the other side of the tracks was the Mote Mahal, an Indian restaurant. No, Great Neck is not your average small town.

Bond Street is determined to savor some of the bouquet emanating from its London namesake. The stores know where they are. Jewelers of Bond Street, Bond Street Travel, Bond Street Interiors—what's the good of having a nice-sounding address without going all-out? Bond Street has sidewalks of what appears to be painstakingly laid bricks and also is an art neighborhood. The SoHo Gallery had a sign that said "Come In—Open House Today." The door was locked, however, and a smaller handwritten notice said, "Am having lunch at Fredrick's around the corner." We made a mental note to return some day.

The Hechtlinger Galleries were across the street, near Josef Tatar's Original Jewelry and the Omni Eye Inc., a boutique. Went by a very fancy, uh, barbershop—haircutting salon, with chairs that looked like modern thrones.

From there, worked back to the car on Middle Neck, near Fred Wilson's

Prime Concern and noted some of the public notices on the store windows. Most of the events had already taken place, but they gave you a feel of the place: "A Discovery of Jewish Sexuality" was the topic at a session in the Great Neck Synagogue. A musical revue was taking place at the Great Neck Library. If you needed help quickly, the Walk-In Student Service was waiting for you. The National Paraplegia Foundation Art Sale, the Hadassah Rummage Sale and an art auction were all on the agenda at other locations. Not to mention the Stretch-Or-Dollar Bazaar. Or the Little Theater of Mind's Eye presentation and the Elks Lodge Bazaar and the Transcendental Meditation gatherings, or the Creative Rap Groups for singles.

On the surface, that Sunday afternoon, Great Neck was somnolent, but it was evident that back away from the main street was a life teeming with incident, or at least togetherness. Some people were finding themselves and others were losing themselves in the consumer ecstasies of our era.

There was more to Great Neck than met the eye, although the eye was already crammed with a bewildering assortment of perceptions. Roosevelt Field really doesn't compare.

in coming and, in 1931, Monsignor Spellman was named Auxiliary Bishop of Boston and, seven years later, he was appointed Archbishop of New York. In the process, he was able to reward his friends and sponsors, the Bradys. In 1927, through his offices, Mr. Brady was given the Grand Cross of St. Gregory, and Mrs. Brady and Mrs. James A. Farrell were named two of the three Dames of Malta in the entire United States. Thus Genevieve Garvan Brady became the Duchess Brady.

The Bradys also maintained a huge estate called "Inisfada" on the North Shore of Long Island near Manhasset. The road on which "Inisfada" was situated had been nicknamed "The Irish Channel" because so many wealthy Irishmen had large estates along its length. In addition to "Inisfada," there was the big place belonging to Nicholas F. Brady's nephew, James Cox Brady, Jr. James Cox Brady had inherited \$25 million and directorships in fifty corporations from his father, though he had started out "shoveling coal by the side of Polish and Italian immigrants" at the Consolidated Gas Company in the Bronx—which his uncle happened to own, so his rise was not too slow. It was James Cox Brady who "bailed out" Walter Chrysler when his company was in difficulties. James Cox Brady put substantial money into the Chrysler Corporation, and went on its board. In addition to his place on the Channel, James Cox Brady owned a racing stable in Ireland and the lovely old Cashel Palace Hotel.

Next door to "Inisfada" was the Joseph P. Grace estate. Joseph Grace was one of the sons of the Irish-born William Russell Grace who, with his brother Michael, founded W. R. Grace & Company, the Grace Steamship Line, and the Grace National Bank. W. R. Grace & Company was founded in Peru in the 1850's, and old William R. had married a Yankee skipper's daughter and, in the 1860's moved to New York, where he built up a substantial business and became the first Irish-born Mayor of New York. His son, Joseph P. Grace, divided his time comfortably between the Long

survey beginning at Kissena Boulevard in Flushing and striking across country, passing south of Flushing Cemetery and north of Alley Pond. By the end of this preliminary survey, twenty-two miles had been covered with three or four possible lines laid out. By the end of 1853 it had become apparent that the Flushing R.R. company had means to build to Flushing only, and talk of an extension eastward died away.

Three years later in 1856 another attempt to arouse public interest was made, this time at Manhasset, but again nothing happened. Three years more passed and in 1859 certain prominent and wealthy estate owners in Bayside, Great Neck and Manhasset began to discuss seriously the feasibility of organizing a road to Glen Cove. In the preceding year the Flushing R.R. had gone into bankruptcy, and there was some hesitation about any new railroad projects pending the court's disposition of the Flushing road.

In the year 1863 the obscurity that had hitherto cloaked the activities of the North Shore backers was dispelled. On June 29 at a meeting at Little Neck a company was formally organized, it was resolved to build eastward to Manhasset, and to place on the market 8,000 shares of stock at \$25 each. At this first meeting 4,700 shares of stock at \$117,500 were subscribed. The initial meeting of the Board of Directors was held on July 16, and at a subsequent meeting held August 29, 1863, a committee was appointed with power to obtain a new survey of the route with maps of the same, and estimates of the cost of the proposed road. The legal organization of the company was perfected on September 23, 1863. The road was to be known as the "North Shore R. R. Company" and its backers included many of the most prominent names in North Hempstead Town, such as Messenger, Mitchell, Willets, Bell, Mott and Udall.

During August and September 1863 all the remaining stock was subscribed and the company had two or three possible routes surveyed. As soon as the surveyors appeared with their chains, a lively excitement ensued, every property owner urging that the road be located on his neighbor's property and not on his own. This was especially true in Flushing. It soon developed that there were two main routes under consideration: the direct one which continued the Flushing R.R. track eastward in a straight line, and the meadow route, which dropped south from

The North Shore R

the Flushing R.F. skirted the south of the directors that abuse from some route through the

The direct route through the center of population is the station in the middle of the route and the station in many of the villages.

The first month right-of-way from this stretch to bid was in doubt. On grading and bridge road awarded to construction on resolve the thor who were oppos Court for a con authority to deci Flushing deplore owners should h villagers. The FL direct route, and be least injuriou location of whic prosperity of the

A complication of the grade at the time who were in favor of railroad making it on Street where the nearly everyone wanted to run in a cut with and Union Street up the cut altogether. When the cut began, it was any unsightly railroad and for many years

Union Streets alongside the right-of-way was the site of the Flushing Institute, whose stately Greek revival edifice would be injured by railroad operation.

This compromise drew an immediately favorable public reaction, and the commissioners were grateful to be able to give the plan their formal authorization on March 2, 1864. The North Shore R.R. officials were not altogether pleased at the prospect of being saddled with the expense of making an extensive railroad cut through Flushing and erecting bridges besides, but realized that it would be wise to accept the solution that pleased almost everyone and promised an end to expensive lawsuits.

As finally determined, the grade from Main Street and 1,100 feet eastward to Union Street provided for a rise of 67 feet to the mile; from thence 600 feet to Bowne Street, of 68 feet to the mile; and for the next 1,000 feet of 95 feet to the mile. Approximately, 43,000 cubic feet of earth had to be removed, and the total damages for bridges, land and retaining walls came to almost \$30,000. This dismal prospect was somewhat surprisingly and pleasantly relieved by the generous donation of the whole of the right-of-way through the Flushing Institute grounds by Elias Fairchild, its principal, one of the property owners who had originally opposed the railroad in the courts.

With the troublesome question of the right-of-way disposed of, Mr. Decker, the contractor, could begin active construction of the road. Work was begun on February 25, 1864 on the land of Mr. Daniel T. Smith, who conveyed to the North Shore company at the very low price of \$1,391.20 nine acres of land at Great Neck for the depot ground and terminus. With the approach of good working weather in the spring of 1864 the contractor broke ground at four or five more locations. Meanwhile, another commission of three men was appointed by the court to assess damages along the right-of-way through Bayside and Little Neck. The awards made by these commissioners are full of historic interest and seem fantastic when contrasted with the high value of Queens County land today:

Robert M. Bell, \$2,960, Francis Lewis Boulevard to Bell Boulevard.

Thomas W. Willets, \$2,600, Auburndale Lane to Francis Lewis Boulevard.

The North Shore

John Bowne
crossing.
Edward A.
Meadows
C. H. Hun
Avenue, F
Joseph H. F
Hill, (13/4
Mrs. Murra
Hill.

The high
but indemn
nursery stock
ran ads in t
vines, etc. "f
way from F
acquired at a
1864 working
graded from
at work on th
places work t
accomplished
with the fund
quit in a bod
ing suits for

In March
renew buildin
were devoted
accompanyin
trestle across
much more c
directors had
required than
that the mea
fill they requ
700 loads of c
of-way and th
the soft muck
necessary to b

mishap. As yet no depot buildings had been put up and the turntable at Great Neck had not yet been installed.

Almost two months passed quietly in leveling up the track and ballasting the rails, and then on Saturday, October 27, 1866, the directors threw open the road to public travel. At the beginning only one train ran per day in each direction, leaving Great Neck at 7:30 A.M. and Hunter's Point at 4 P.M. The maiden trip was made so quietly that the conductor had to dismount from the cars in the vicinity of 207th Street, Bayside, and let down the bars in the fence separating the Thomas C. Bell and Robert M. Bell farms, an action which moved the local paper to comment embarrassedly: "To get out and let down the bars must not be considered a characteristic of railroading on Long Island. As soon as the trains run regularly, the bars will be kept down."

During the season of 1867 the North Shore R.R. completed its road, erecting a few station buildings and finishing the Union and Bowne Streets bridges. In addition the service was increased to two trips a day each way, the new train leaving Hunter's Point at 9:30 A.M. and departing from Great Neck at 12:30 P.M. The North Shore R.R. from the first made no attempt to operate as an independent road; at the time of incorporation a contract had been concluded with the New York & Flushing R.R. to operate the six-mile line as an eastern extension of the Flushing railroad. The contract called for payment to the New York & Flushing of one-half the gross receipts of the North Shore R.R., and this agreement was signed on September 26, 1863.

The cost of the road had been far above any of the original estimates. In Flushing the various property owners had resisted each and every line proposed and it had become necessary to resort to the expensive process of appointing commissioners. Many residents along the line had made fair promises to the directors, who were led to the belief that these parties would willingly convey the small strip needed through their lands for a trifling consideration or for a fair compensation at most. In the end human nature asserted itself and these same persons were often the most extortionate and unreasonable in their demands. Only five landowners donated land or transferred it at small cost, and the total value of such property came to only \$3,000, not including the Daniel Smith gift of the Great Neck station area. In all other cases the North Shore company was forced to meet

1866